

Book Review

Handbook of Moral Motivation. Theories, Models, Applications. Edited by Karin Heinrichs, Fritz Oser, Terence Lovat. Rotterdam/Boston/Taipei: Sense Publishers, 668. p.



Hungarian Educational Research Journal
2014, Vol. 4(4) 94–97
© The Author(s) 2014
<http://herj.lib.unideb.hu>
Debrecen University Press



DOI: 10.14413/herj.2014.04.13.

Reviewed by Szilvia Barta¹

There was one certain reason why I wished to read and review this book, namely, it focuses on morality and more important, it includes a section specifically targeted to teacher education. As both topics form the basis of my research interest, I am writing this review from this perspective, that is, morality and the profession of teaching, and teacher education, by remaining in the field of educational studies. My initial expectations regarding the book were the following. I was hoping to read and learn new perspectives, theoretical models and research outcomes of developing morality in higher education in general, and in the teaching profession more specifically. I supposed I might learn how morality and proper ethical conduct are built upon each other, whether such a developmental process emerges in teacher training – including teacher educators' roles and responsibilities, or rather, it has become a part of the induction process and professional socialization. In the subsequent paragraphs, I aim to answer my initial questions and expectations regarding the book by highlighting some – arbitrarily chosen – relevant topics of the diverse and numerous set.

Heinrichs, Ozel and Lovat's sizable volume is divided into seven chapters that take us from the theories on moral motivation through the developmental effects related to it and moral motivation types to its presence in professional and educational contexts. The editors share their vision of editing a book for systematizing theory on moral psychology and moral philosophy and pointing out new directions for future research. However, another reviewer of the book, Kim (2014) has concluded that the papers synthesize theories and models rather than offer original, novel perspectives or interdisciplinary dimensions. With no intention to continue this debate I was curious how psychological and philosophical theories and models filter down to moral education later in the book,

¹ This research was supported by the European Union and the State of Hungary, co-financed by the European Social Fund in the framework of TÁMOP 4.2.4. A/2-11-1-2012-0001 'National Excellence Program'.

how 'disciplinary borders' are crossed and as the editors noted, how educational psychology is considered. The educational perspective is covered throughout the volume, from listing theoretical researchers whose work is utilised in education sciences (Kohlberg, Bandura, Erikson, Piaget, just to name a few) to guidelines on educational intervention (bullying as a moral/immoral motivational action, the moral background of juvenile delinquency, etc.) to dimensions on teacher education and professional teacher training.

Morality related to professions and more specifically, to the teaching profession gained a substantial part in the volume. The editors and authors exemplify the lack or malfunctioning morality in schools such as cheating, mobbing, lying, stealing, etc, we can also read about informed social reflection and moral decision-making as a form of hidden curriculum. Education-related examples continue with arguing that teacher internship is a great period for practising morality and ethical decision-making. However, I was curious to learn how the development of professional morality and ethical behaviour is detailed in the volume. Such development is discussed on the personal level, personality traits, emotions, 'the self' and the social/community-level, considering others, sports or the professions are included as well. Morality in the professions is interpreted as a bridge, a continuum between moral motivation and the "oughts" of certain professions.

Furthermore, I aimed to learn about how these processes work during teacher training, how the relation of instructors and students shape moral development, whether teacher educators' morality is included in any papers or rather, morality and professional ethics are more concentrated to the workplace. A useful theory on these issues is offered in the volume by highlighting the role of "exceptional people who have demonstrated some noteworthy measure of moral excellence" (p. 198), that is, the phenomenon of exemplarity, which holds a significant interpretative power for teachers. Besides, the topic of developing morality in childhood and adolescence has brought interesting results, which have significant implications for teachers, though such implications have not been clearly outlined in that paper. Furthermore, the concept of strategic-cooperative ethics that is introduced in the volume might have serious recommendations for teachers working together and for classroom activities to enhance students' ethical conduct, to help teachers understand how fear could be raised by morality and how cooperation with others might transform personal ethics into an ethical life-strategy.

As one of the most important topics of the volume, professional ethics, teacher training students and the induction process gained substantial attention. First, the development of professions in general is discussed, then the processes of how professional school applicants learn the (moral) values, principles and expectations of professions, how they understand such values and expectations and how practicing colleagues (teacher educators!) interpret the same issues, how professionals struggle with integrating professional moral values and the moral self are detailed. This professional socialization

process is often described among the medical professionals but usually less attention is paid to the teaching profession. The role of professional codes of ethics is highlighted here, which is remarkable as such codes in the teaching profession are often de-emphasized and neglected. All the above mentioned issues related to the teaching profession peek in Campbell's paper when she highlights teachers' role in modelling morality, obeying to professional moral standards and battling with ethical challenges, though the author also demonstrates the lack of integrated, well-grounded, clearly articulated moral systems in the profession, too. Besides teachers, the role of school principals in shaping schools' moral atmosphere is also reflected upon.

The volume offers a rich source for theories on morality and moral motivation, moral education but at the same time, it is also supported by a variety of empirical examinations and research outcomes. We are also provided with an extensive description of scientific tools of measurement on morality, such as Rest's four-component model and also, the possible ways to develop such measurement tools. Scientific perspectives on morality apply various academic fields, such as psychology, philosophy, biology or education sciences, and diverse methodologies, offering both theoretical and empirical examinations (including both qualitative and quantitative methods), we can also find different research instruments (mainly survey items), and analytical levels (personal and social, individual and contextual-situational), too. However, a clear distinction or explanation of the relation of morality and ethics on the personal level and related to professions would support the audience's understanding well. For example, we may find useful guidelines on the importance of educational intervention in higher education to develop students' future professional ethical behaviour, which stems in moral motivation models, though the internal structure of such a relationship is not explained in detail. The societal-geographical coverage of the studies is broad on the one hand, papers deal with children, young adults, representatives of different professionals and the individual in general. On the other hand, data on non-Western European countries would be welcome as well (besides engaging discussions on German, Dutch, etc. samples or novel perspectives on Taiwan).

The volume is an extraordinary reading for anyone who is interested in morality, even for self-development purposes. Besides, it may serve university students well, especially in the fields of psychology, medical studies, humanities and educational studies for providing an established framework of moral psychology and related theories, moral philosophical models and also, for the future representatives of certain professions where helping and working with human clients is essential. Finally, practicing teachers may also find useful information and efficient ways to enhance school and classroom norms, atmosphere and to develop their students' values, characters and morality besides fostering their own integrity.

References

Kim, M. (2014). Handbook of Moral Motivation: Theories, Models, Applications. Australian Journal of Teacher Education, 39(1). <http://dx.doi.org/10.14221/ajte.2014v39n1.8>